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# THE LIFE OF GEORGE AUGUSTUS GATES

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ISABEL SMITH GATES

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( *To Work is to Pray* )

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GEORGE AUGUSTUS GATES



# THE LIFE OF GEORGE AUGUSTUS GATES

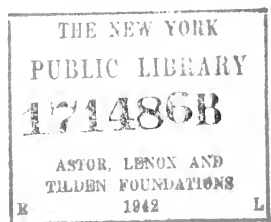
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## FOREWORD

I SEND this little book out with fear and trembling lest it may seem an unworthy offering. It is not a literary production, it is not a critical estimate of a man's worth to his fellow-creatures, nor to the institutions to which his life was related. It was not written for the public, nor with this larger world in thought, but because of inward compulsion and the joy found in the work, as well as with a desire to leave on record for my sons a summary of their father's life and something concerning the spirit in which his life was lived. Many of the inner circle who have read this sketch feel that because of its intimate touch it has special and peculiar value for that large number of young men and women who have spent their happy college years under his administration. So, I take courage and send it forth to speak its own message in its own way.

ISABEL SMITH GATES.

Cambridge, Mass.,  
April, 1915.

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## GEORGE AUGUSTUS GATES

### A TRIBUTE

My first meeting with President Gates occurred shortly after his acceptance of the presidency of Iowa College. I was leaving for my first year in Europe; he had already spent some years there. In a few incisive and memorable words he gave me advice for which I am under lasting obligations. How often did I recall and act upon it when hesitation through diffidence or doubt would have meant failure to attain a much desired end. So I became, at the very beginning, acquainted with one of our President's most characteristic traits, his clear-sighted, direct and ready helpfulness.

When I returned to the college a full year of the new administration had passed and I was struck by certain manifest changes. There was new order and decorum in chapel, an achievement which had long baffled the earnest efforts of an experienced faculty. "How has this been done?" I asked, and the only answer I could get was, "Gates did it." This was not sufficient for me. I wanted to know *how* Gates did it. No one could tell me; and after serving with him in most confidential relations for many years I am still unable to fully explain

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the President's influence over the students. No list of his virtues and his qualities, no verbatim report of his words, no detailed account of his acts, brings real understanding. "Gates did it"—and "it" was now one thing and now another quite diverse,—because he *was* Gates and through his inherent personality. First at Grinnell, then at Pomona and finally at Fisk upon an alien race that remarkable personality wrought its wise will. At Pomona and at Fisk it was an experienced administrator who worked beneficent changes; but at Grinnell the man was young, untried, inexperienced in academic affairs, and there, it seems, he did his greatest work.

The relations of President Gates to his faculty are well described in Mrs. Gates' faithful sketch. By relieving the teachers of harassing cares concerning discipline he enabled them to devote their energies to instruction and educational organization. In matters academic his was emphatically a faculty administration. He had neither the training nor the disposition required for the mastery of the intricate details of educational systems; but he had a genius for finding the men to do that work, and to them he gave intelligent and effective support.

By nature as well as by training Dr. Gates was a preacher. Out of his own profound religious experience he brought a message of reconciliation between the new science and the old religion. He was peculiarly adapted to aid



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in effecting the transition of the earlier type of Christian college to that of the educational institution open to all truth, and he became a conspicuous leader in the adjustment of the new education to the new social gospel. For twenty years before he came to Grinnell the doctrine of evolution had been sympathetically presented to the students of the college by members of the faculty; but this was largely intramural, the theory was not proclaimed from the housetops. Under President Gates evolution became orthodox both in the college and among the younger ministers of the churches.

Dr. Gates' utter, self-forgetting devotion to his high calling as preacher of righteousness and herald of the truth—*all* the truth that had been revealed to him—shows us the dominant note in his life and character. In the pursuit of this great endeavor he was absolutely fearless and devoid of self-seeking. He once said to me that it never seemed to him right to receive a salary or to accept any kind of pay for what he was doing. His work was a privilege. He rejoiced literally to pour out his life in the cause of righteousness. To his own heart he was debtor. He had received more than he could ever give and how boundless his obligation! How natural for a man of such rare and beautiful spirit to choose for himself the hard places in the service. How natural to stay in the hard places with little pay when easy positions with large salaries were open

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to his acceptance. How natural that the officers of the American Missionary Association knowing the man should seek to secure his services for a negro college in the South.

When finally, with health already damaged in the service of humanity, he went to Fisk, how completely he vindicated his fitness and power to deal with that toughest of human problems, race prejudice. Those of us who knew Gates noted with inward satisfaction, but without surprise, the skill with which he led the Governor of his state and—greater triumph still!—the Governor's wife to an entire change of attitude towards our negro citizens. He seemed the man for the time and for the place, and our personal grief for his loss is mingled with sore disappointment and regret that he was not permitted to toil on in his eager, hearty, happy and gloriously successful way throughout the three score and ten years of man's natural earthly span.

JESSE MACY.

Grinnell College,  
Grinnell, Iowa.

## CHAPTER I

### BOYHOOD AND YOUTH

GEORGE AUGUSTUS GATES was born on January 24th, 1851, at Topsham, a small New England village in the granite hills of northern Vermont. His boyhood was passed, however, in East St. Johnsbury where his parents went early in their married life. His mother knew no other home for thirty-five years. The house in which they lived was destroyed by fire about 1908. I well remember it with its beautiful location, standing high in the angle made by the old St. Johnsbury road, which, as it went over the covered bridge, forked to east and west. There was a stone wall about the front yard over which honeysuckle and nasturtiums hung in fullness of bloom. Along either side of the walk to the front door were beds of old fashioned flowers. The house itself was yellow with white trimmings and green blinds, and stood four square to all the winds that blew. An old friend and neighbor has recently written of it as "the stately home mansion of the Gates family." With the exception of some slight details about the front door, it was a counterpart of the historic Longfellow House in Cambridge. It was here—only about one

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hundred yards from the Moose River—that the boy George passed his boyhood. For some ten years he lived the life of the normal boy—fishing, swimming, hunting woodchucks and making life yield its delights as no one but a boy can. Then a shadow fell across his life in the sudden death of the father,—Hubbard Gates. He was a miller and it was while his mill was being repaired that he was instantly killed by a falling timber. This left the widow with three children, George, Estelle, and little Zora. Mrs. Gates was a young woman of strong, forceful character. As a girl she had been given all the education which was in reach of the average girl at that time, and had even gone for a short time to Newbury Seminary—afterward, Montpelier Seminary—which was a rare privilege. Most fathers thought a common district school education quite sufficient for their girls. Mrs. Gates' father knew she was both an able scholar and teacher for she was always eagerly sought in the district schools, and for seven years taught successfully large classes and often big boys, twice her size, if not twice her age. Her father had been a miller in good circumstances and the home possessed the comforts then available. When left with no income and three young children she still had her home. Her husband's parents occupied a wing of it, but their resources were not adequate to the growing demands of four more. Her neighbors said

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“she could never earn a living for herself and care for those young children,” but, nothing daunted, she set her face to the task. That she succeeded far beyond her expectations was her reward. She opened one of her sunny east rooms for millinery and dressmaking, and as the work grew from year to year, she had six or more girls working under her direction.

George, as the oldest child, was very helpful, taking care of the home, working wherever he could to add his boy's mite to the treasury, and often, in the evening, running long seams on the sewing machine to help his mother. That he did not neglect his school work these words recently written by one of the townspeople will bear witness. “He was the most brilliant scholar we ever had in our East Village schools; it was just as natural for him to acquire knowledge readily from books as it was for our song-birds to sing. He never sowed any ‘wild oats’ but was always ‘a credit to his bringing up.’ ” One summer, when about thirteen, he went to work for a farmer, which experience was never forgotten. The farmer forgot that he was a boy, a growing boy, not over strong, and he worked him like a man. The food was monotonous and not overabundant, the hours long and the work heavy for growing muscles. The boy never complained, and only once in that long summer of unremitting toil did he ever lose courage. Having been allowed to go home over Sunday, he dreaded so much going back

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that he wept upon his mother's shoulders. Years later, when sometimes asked if he would like to be a farmer, he would reply with perhaps surprising emphasis, "No, I never want to see a farm implement." The iron had entered his soul and years could not efface the recollection.

Later, in the fall of 1865, he attended St. Johnsbury Academy, going down the four miles on Monday morning and returning Friday night. His mother supplied him with his food for the week. He was always a fine scholar, taking rank among the first, if not leading his class. After graduating with honor the question came, "What next? Work or more education?" Mrs. Gates said "More education." The neighbors sniffed and even said ironically, "You seem to think your boy a little smarter than ours, that you send him to college." Few boys in that town had so much as dreamt of college, why should her boy desire to go? In spite of all the discouragements, the mother kept counsel with her own heart and her boy's ambitions, and to Dartmouth College he went in the fall of 1869. Dartmouth College in '69 was not the college of today. Rooms were heated with stoves; cared for by the individual student; there was no bath, public or private; the old pump on the College Common furnished cool water in summer and ice water in winter, and surely to be clean then was to be akin to godliness.



ROSETTA GATES STARK

THE MOTHER OF PRESIDENT GATES AT EIGHTY-SEVEN

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## *Boyhood and Youth*

Nevertheless, high thinking and fine fellowship were as common then as now. It was the custom at that time for many boys to earn part or all of their expenses by staying out during the winter term to teach, and in summer by finding profitable employment on farms or among the hotels of the White Mountain resorts. Work for this one term was arranged with this great falling off in view. Now-a-days the loss from this dropping out is deemed so unwise that every effort is made to obtain work for students in the college town, so keeping hold upon and uniting the student body. During those four years he joined the Delta Kappa Epsilon Society; in his Junior year he won a place which was assigned by rank on the Junior Exhibition program, and on Commencement Day, in June, 1873, he gave an oration when receiving his B. A. From '73 to '75 he was Principal of the Vermont Morrisville Academy and Graded Schools, where he proved himself an able administrator and an especially inspiring teacher, and won friendships which lasted to the time of his death.

In the fall of 1875 he entered Andover Theological Seminary, remaining two years. Following that he was tutor in a prominent Boston family for two years. These years were fruitful in spiritual growth and they added to his fine mental equipment a refinement and culture of manner and spirit which means much to a youth who has been a part of an educa-

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tional institutional life for many years. The quiet strength of the head of this household, the rarely fine spiritual vision and mental activity of the wife and mother, and the constant contact with men and women—the choice spirits of Boston—made this home of unusual charm and inspirational power. With them he went abroad for a year of travel and remained for a year of study after their return.

He was able to sit under some of the ablest of theologians and philosophers, as Godet at Neuchatel, Christlieb at Bonn, and Lotze at Göttingen. It was often his great privilege to be invited by Lotze to accompany him on some of his long walks. We can imagine what these walks held for him. It was during this period of study and travel that he met and solved the fundamental questions of life. Because this conquest was fraught with temporary darkness and great agony of spirit he was later able in a peculiar measure to help young men to see the light and to find “the Way, the Truth and the Life.” Out of fourteen men and women who represent Pomona College now on the foreign field twelve went out under his leadership.

Upon returning to America full of enthusiasm, having found, as he believed out of his own experiences, a sure foundation for an intelligent, consistent faith and loyalty to the Lord Jesus Christ, he finished his work at Andover and graduated in June, 1880. Then came one

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of the most unexpectedly trying experiences of his life. He had been taught in Germany to seek for the Truth fearlessly, as that was the meaning of Life, and to hold fast that which was good. He was called in August, 1880, to become the pastor of the Congregational Church of Littleton, New Hampshire. The Ecclesiastical Council, which was headed by Dartmouth's President, Dr. S. C. Bartlett, refused him ordination because of "doctrinal unsoundness." Dr. Gates had found "the Christianity of Jesus Christ was summed up in love; its theology, God is love; its law, the law of love; its ritual, the spontaneous expression of love to God; its Church organization, coöperation in the service of others, inspired by love." But this was not enough. His statement of formal belief was frank and fearless. He did not know dogmatically of certain great mysteries. To him the revelation of truth was progressive, growing ever more and more. To the young man before them spiritual conviction, belief in the unseen as the real, a working gospel which was a fountain of living water for quenching the thirst of men, were things he knew he had. However, Dr. Bartlett and others of the council were asking that he follow the old paths in the theological woods, forgetting that "paths are not dwelling places, but cleared roads for advancing feet." So the verdict remained "he had no gospel to preach." It is interesting to notice

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in this connection "time's revenges." This same doughty knight of theological truth, Dr. Bartlett, wrote Mr. Gates some ten years later (as President of Dartmouth College) announcing the bestowal of the degree of Doctor of Divinity upon him at that commencement season, and spoke of his pleasure at being chosen to convey the message. As if this was not enough, in 1892 he again wrote, expressing the pleasure it would give him to have Dr. Gates for his successor in office as President of Dartmouth College, should he find himself able to favorably consider the matter. Those two incidents healed forever the tender spot in his heart caused by that crushing blow at the beginning of his ministerial career. Among Dr. Gates' letters I find one, written evidently about the time of this second letter of Dr. Bartlett's, in which the writer (a minister) says, "May I be allowed to congratulate you on the honor you have received from the Trustees of Dartmouth College. It must have been especially gratifying as coming from an institution whose recent head once sat upon an ordaining council,—zealous for God to be sure but 'not according to knowledge.' " In this connection may be mentioned an interesting episode in the life of John Fiske, which I found published recently in one of our magazines. While an undergraduate in Harvard Mr. Fiske was summoned before the faculty under the double charge of having been found reading a book in church

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instead of listening to the sermon, and the "accumulated evidences of his conversion to Darwinism." He was let off, however, with an admonition and a threat of "summary expulsion if he did not in the future refrain from airing his too-advanced views." Less than ten years later he was called back to Harvard, to expound under its auspices that for which he had almost suffered expulsion. "Short range condemnation and a long range vindication" is not unusual in history.

In 1880, within a short time after his ordination in Littleton was refused, Dr. Gates went to Upper Montclair, New Jersey, to preach to a congregation of people of different denominations. They had built a fine edifice, but because of technicalities possession was denied them. The result was a generous giving up of all that the building had meant to them in labor, hope and sacrifice. At such a time, under such trying circumstances, was the young man called to bring honey from the lion's loins and to re-create the spirit of Christian unity. He accepted gladly the hard task which would occupy his mind and keep his own spirit sweet. A council was called with Dr. Lyman Abbott as moderator and he was ordained and installed as pastor. Within three years his salary of \$600 was raised to \$1,500 and later to \$2,000. He married in 1882 Isabel Augustus Smith of Syracuse, N. Y., and two of his three children were born while in this parish. That

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his work was blessed, the record shows. This church of forty-two members held at that time the unique position of giving to missions the largest amount proportionally of any Congregational Church then in the United States.

## CHAPTER II

### LIFE AT GRINNELL COLLEGE

IN the fall of 1887, after seven years of service with the Upper Montclair church, Mr. Gates accepted a call to Iowa College, at Grinnell, Iowa. In connection with this event a quotation from one of his letters to the President of the Board may be of interest: "In addition to what I have previously written, I desire to say this, in order to avoid any misunderstanding on the part of anyone. What I have said, or now say, must not be understood as a pledge to any policy, nor must it be looked upon as a promise to say or do anything, or to refrain from doing or saying anything. I desire that it shall be understood between the Trustees and myself that if I come, I come, to quote the words of one of their own number, 'as a free man in Jesus Christ.' I desire to state to the Trustees that in case I come it will be my purpose to keep my work and my office free from partisan theological complications. I refer to questions now disturbing our denomination. Any other course would seem to me injurious to the best interests of all concerned."

This Congregational college was born of the spirit of that Iowa Band of young men who so

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splendidly ventured forth from their homes in the far East, leaving financial success behind them, to enter into the great unknown West and build churches and start colleges. Let us never forget what this country owes educationally to the Congregational Church. Like the heroic Methodist circuit riders, these Congregational preachers also went forth to conquer into the then far West, the Bible in one hand and the school-book in the other.

To this college at Grinnell, from 1887 to 1900, Dr. Gates gave thirteen of his best years, equally successful as an administrator and an inspiring constructive educator. The funds of the college grew rapidly under his hand. A new chair was created, unlike anything then in existence in the colleges. It was called "The Chair of Applied Christianity." Its purpose was to promote the study of social conditions and the search for methods of Christ-like application to them. The first to occupy this chair was Dr. George D. Herron and later it was filled by Dr. Edward Steiner, of international reputation.

Dr. Gates established the "Friday morning Chapel," when the President should speak directly to his student body. For years his printed "Chapel Talks" were in constant demand, and their variety, originality and virility still make them of interest. He, too, continued on a broad scale the custom which has since been widely adopted as a source of inspiration



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and broadening of view-point; namely, the inviting of prominent men to speak on the college platform. He had great faith in the "contagion of greatness and fine enthusiasms."

While at Grinnell Dr. Gates received many honors. He was asked to be President of two large state universities, promising large financial inducements for the work and for himself personally; two colleges in the East followed suit, and the refusal to one of them cost him so much that it was hard for him in later years to speak of it. His reason for declining was the same to all. The need was so great where he was, and the unsettling of the college if left would be so serious a matter that he must not think of himself. It was characteristic of his whole life. He was given the degree of LL. D. from Nebraska University in 1893 and the degree of D. D. from Dartmouth College in 1892. He appreciated these overtures and honors and used them as spurs to larger endeavor. I might speak of the value of his work educationally to the state. He traveled its length and breadth again and again, preaching and inspiring young men to seek for the best. He strove to open the eyes of older men to new forms of truth, as well as to have the obedient spirit and the listening ear. In Grinnell he stood for clean athletics, when such a stand was somewhat unpopular; he made an "honor system" into an honor habit and a permanent basis for good faith between stu-

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dents and Faculty. He broadened the curriculum and introduced the group system; he dignified the chapel service, and his unique chapel talks were something many of the "town" as well as of the "gown" did not like to miss. He gave more adequate expression to the "Grinnell spirit." He embodied afresh that spirit which had been so potent from the beginning of the college. To his Faculty he was not only the dignified officer, but one who could use "parliamentary principles without permitting action to be hindered by parliamentary rules; his humor lightened dreary discussion, his enthusiasm gave interest to details, and one lost the sense of pettiness of work in the feeling of its greatness."

The Faculty grew from seventeen to thirty-five. The scholastic standing was constantly raised, so that when he left it stood among the highest of the Western colleges as to quality of work. In 1910, he returned to Grinnell to give the Commencement address. Referring to that happy time, he writes: "It was a special joy to me to be at Grinnell Commencement. Nearly nine-tenths of the alumni body which gathered at that time were 'my' graduates. If Peter hesitates about admitting me, I am perfectly ready to refer the case to those Grinnell alumni."

Perhaps a word ought to be said here as to Dr. George D. Herron and his work. He came to Iowa College to occupy the new Chair of

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Applied Christianity, presented by Mrs. Rand of Burlington, under new conditions and in response to the growing social consciousness of men that human brotherhood might be possible. He hoped to bring to this chair fresh interpretations of brotherhood, in the light of the pressing social and industrial interests of the day. He came at the invitation of the Trustees, and with the cordial coöperation of the President and Faculty. That he then had a great gospel of social righteousness to preach, few would question. Dr. Gates gave him his cordial, sincere coöperation, his personal affection and the freedom of his Chair as long as he could conscientiously do so. There came a time however when he could no longer agree with many of Dr. Herron's doctrines, nor endorse all his teaching. Neither was the college ready or willing to be held responsible for many of his growing radical views. So gradually the breach widened, and other elements of danger entering in, through personal relations, made it best for Dr. Herron to resign. This came about some six months after Dr. and Mrs. Gates had gone to Colorado seeking the recovery of health for Mrs. Gates.

Perhaps Dr. Gates' splendid belief in the goodness of men, his rare loyalty to friendship when once given, his unquenchable faith in the value and greatness of the truth which he believed Dr. Herron's message embodied, with his desire to see that truth launched upon a

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world as ever reluctant, gave him a patience and charity during this period beyond that of most men. It was a peculiarly delicate and difficult administrative situation. Beside the vital truth wrapped up in Dr. Herron's message, there was varied and fine service rendered by those standing behind Dr. Herron, and there were obligations for generous gifts and for the creation and endowment of the very chair Dr. Herron occupied. It was perhaps all these elements which entering in made Dr. Gates less able to understand as fully or quickly what may have seemed very clear to a disinterested onlooker. Then too, Dr. Gates never allowed himself to judge any man without an adequate ground for that judgment. This very quality endeared him to his student body, for they knew that at his hand they would receive justice. It also made any sentence of his more effective and impressive. From a student who had to leave college because of flagrant wrongdoing, came this testimony many years later: "I want to thank you now for the discipline I received at your hands. The justice and severity, coupled with your belief that I could and would retrieve myself, has been my satisfaction and incentive. I want you to know that I have achieved honorable citizenship and am a happy husband and father." This genius for loyalty, for a wonderful faith in the deep-down goodness of men, was Dr. Gates' contribution to his world. Like all great virtues it sometimes

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leaned to the side of weakness, and so may have at times affected adversely his administrative ability. At any rate, of this we are sure, "Time justifies a calm judgment and an unflinching faith in the leading of Providence." The Chair of Applied Christianity in Grinnell College has been occupied since Dr. Herron's resignation by Dr. Edward A. Steiner, widely known all over this country. Under him many young men have been stimulated to interest in and work for social betterment. Through the generosity of the college, Dr. Steiner has been able to give himself to a national work for a new and better appreciation of our so-called alien races.

In a recent number of "The Congregationalist," in the telling of his life story, Dr. Steiner bears unconscious witness to the value of those truths which Dr. Herron announced and for whose promulgation Dr. Gates and the college gave themselves. These are his words: "A number of causes have contributed to the measure of success which I have attained in my department. The radicalism of my predecessor had by the time I began my work become more or less the accepted doctrine of the churches. At least no one was startled by the word social as related to the teaching of Jesus. The seed sown by the pioneers had germinated well, and many churches were permeated by the social spirit of the gospel. I began teaching the glorious Christian doctrine of Brother-

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hood, my one aim being to send my students out rightly related to their God, their fellow-men, and their duty. . . . I teach one religious doctrine with a scientific dogmatism and one scientific doctrine with a religious zeal; namely, *that underneath all the differences between races and classes humanity is essentially one.*”

Surely one of these “pioneers” as a sower of a social gospel was Dr. Gates, and Dr. Heron’s reiterated message, the one clear note through all the din of other sounds and the one for which Dr. Gates gave himself with passionate earnestness, was that “underneath all the differences between races and classes humanity is essentially one.” Shall not Iowa College at Grinnell be proud that she stood long and even suffered that from her watch-tower might ring out to the churches and to the civic conscience of men one of the first strong messages of social regeneration through the reality and practicality of the Brotherhood of Man?

In speaking of the Chair of Applied Christianity and its first occupant I must add a word in regard to a religious weekly called “The Kingdom,” published for several years at Minneapolis, Minnesota. It was the enlarged “Northwestern Congregationalist” under new leadership. This paper was closely related to the work done at Grinnell in that it was made possible by the spirit engendered there and by the men who came to the “retreat” held there for several successive summers. The paper

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was principally concerned with things pertaining to the coming of the Kingdom of Christ here and now,—hence its name, “The Kingdom.” Its aim was to persuade men to “seek first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness.” It dealt largely with those great questions which touch the social relations of men and vitally affect the establishing of the Kingdom of Heaven on earth. Its managing editor and publisher was Rev. Herbert W. Gleason, whose personal sacrifices, financial and otherwise, in the conduct of the paper can only be appreciated by those who worked with him at the time. The board of associate editors was headed by Dr. Gates and included such men as Prof. John Bascom, Dr. Josiah Strong, Prof. Jesse Macy, Dr. Thomas C. Hall, Rev. Geo. D. Black, Prof. John R. Commons, Dr. Washington Gladden and Mr. Robert A. Woods, while the list of contributors contained the names of many prominent leaders in the religious and social thought of the country. All gave freely of their services without compensation, and seldom if ever has a paper of its kind received such notable and generous support “without money and without price.” It did a great work in stimulating the growth of social consciousness through the application of the teachings of Jesus Christ to social conditions. The publication of this weekly was at a time too, when the idea of service as applied to business relations was exceedingly new. In the awakening

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of such mighty forces, it is not strange that they should have at times gone to extremes, but because they were mighty and righteous, they ultimately must be stronger than the powers they stood against. Today this now tremendously awakened conscience is dealing sternly, not only with wrong committed, but with the persons whose methods tend to such wrong. All our public service commissions today are only another expression of this same awakened conscience.

There is however, no great social movement but carries with it much that is not essential to its usefulness, nor necessarily a part of its value. Such was the fact in connection with the new spirit of social consciousness which was embodied in Dr. Herron's message. That it was imperiled later by the individual does not permanently detract from its value. He emphasized this gospel of social responsibility at a time when the churches had not yet greatly realized or preached it, and when the people's vision was darkened. All that was precious and vital in it has come now, in our day, with such force and power that it is hard to realize the apathy and even antagonism to it existent at that time. A prominent minister and teacher of men wrote three years later that it was his deliberate opinion "that the little paper, while it lasted, struck the highest and truest note of any publication in America, before or since."

There was one experience in Dr. Gates' aca-



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demio life that deserves special note in this connection because of its peculiar interest and value to all lovers of honorable methods which concern our public schools. In the year 1896 Dr. Gates read before the College Section of the Southeastern Iowa Teachers' Association, a little pamphlet of some forty-seven pages. Its object was "to acquaint the public with certain notorious facts relating to the unscrupulous methods of a well known school-book monopoly in introducing its text books into the public school." This paper created so strong a sentiment as to its courage, timeliness and value, that it was endorsed by the Association as a body and recommended for publication. However, it lay for a year on Dr. Gates' desk before it was sent to "The Kingdom Publishing Co.," of Minneapolis, Minnesota, by whom it was published under the title of "A Foe to American Schools." In the writing of this pamphlet Dr. Gates had but accepted the American Book Company's own challenge, publicly stated in circulars sent out by them to their patrons. These are their words: "We ask our patrons and correspondents to look around them and view the business transactions of this company and its agents. We invite such a test." The first edition of two thousand copies was at once exhausted and a second was called for. These were just ready for circulation when the American Book Company sought to secure an injunction against the pub-

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lishers, charging the book with being "false, scandalous and libelous" and asking for an order of court to restrain the further publication and circulation of the book. After a hearing in court this petition for an injunction was dismissed. Then followed a suit against Dr. Gates personally, as the author, and another against the publishers, each alleging libel and conspiracy with rival publishers and each claiming one hundred thousand dollars damages. Meanwhile the little pamphlet went far and wide, uttering its warning to American educators. In January, 1898, in the suit against the Kingdom Publishing Company, the judge who presided practically took the case out of the hands of the jury and ordered a verdict for the plaintiff on a purely legal technicality,—an important witness not being able to reach the court-room in time to have his evidence included. One of the jurymen, after the trial was over, stated that in their deliberations the evidence given in the case was not considered at all; in view of the judge's positive instructions they felt bound to render a verdict for the company. This was made for seventy-five hundred dollars instead of one hundred thousand dollars.

With regard to the suit against Dr. Gates personally, the Des Moines Leader of March 4, 1898, made the following comment:

"The American Book Company received a knockout blow yesterday at the hands of Judge

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Woolson of the United States Circuit Court in its libel damage case against President Gates of Iowa College. Fourteen of the fifteen counts in its petition for one hundred thousand dollar damages were stricken out. The fifteenth which stands is of such little importance as compared to the others, that the finding practically carried the book company out of court. . . . The rulings of the court give the plaintiff a case, such as it is, but the effect is, to intents and purposes, a sweeping victory for Gates. It leaves but seventeen lines of a pamphlet containing forty-seven pages on which to build a case. . . . The case will never be submitted to a court on the question of facts involved in the seventeen lines of the pamphlet in which it is held there may be libel."

Dr. Gates was quite indifferent as to what the verdict of the courts might be, "for no verdict could change the conditions to which the pamphlet called attention." He felt the case was only nominally his "for it is really the case of the American schools and the American people. A corporation should not be unjustly attacked any more than an individual" and for that reason he wished this company to have every opportunity for a clear vindication, but any vindication which should be merely technical, namely a judgment for them when no adequate defense was made, would not be clear vindication. Henry D. Loyd of Chicago said of this suit, "the issue they have

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raised regarding American schools and school children is one of the most momentous that can be presented to the American people." Dr. Gates never regretted his part in helping to arrest in this case, and to make less possible in the future, notorious abuses in any "school-book trust." All the statements made concerning this suit can be verified from Volume X, 1897-1898, of "The Kingdom."

About 1900 the very serious illness of Dr. Gates' wife from persistent asthma, from which she had suffered from her first coming to Iowa, made it absolutely imperative to remove to the high mountain regions of the farther West. The decision was made seemingly in haste, but it had been a growing conviction for several years, only the extreme hour of need brought the decision to a climax in twenty-four hours after a consultation of physicians. All that they both had hoped might be their life-work was given up, and Mrs. Gates was taken to Colorado under orders "never to return to live" in that home which was so endeared to them both. Her rapid gain and final restoration to health justified this action. Meantime Dr. Gates returned to Grinnell to adjust the college to the change in leadership, as at this time the trustees felt they could not let him go. He was asked to remain and complete that college year from January to June, and, after a summer in Colorado with his family, to return to open the new college year in September.

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This he did, although it meant much to his family to have him so far away for nearly a year. In December, 1900, having seen the college prepared for a new administrator, he left for Colorado. A quotation from one of the countless letters received at this time, relative to his going to the far West, may prove interesting. It is written by a man who had a large family of children all of whom were at one time or another in college under Dr. Gates.

"We all, belonging to this house, are simply inconsolable at the action you have taken. To us the shadow on the dial seems going backward. It takes all the heart out of Iowa College so far as I am concerned. . . . But I did not start to say such things as these, but to tell you how grateful I am that it has been given to all of my children to have been under your teaching for the past ten years, and to thank you for the inspiration and uplift you have given to them and to so many of the young people of Iowa. Whatever may become of Iowa College in the future, the years of its more recent past will live in those you have led into larger conceptions of life and duty."

There was one incident in connection with Dr. Gates' departure from Iowa College that was so significant and unique, that I want to speak of it here. Just the day before leaving he was asked to attend a Faculty meeting. He was somewhat surprised, as his official meetings with that body were over. On enter-

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ing the room he found a chairman in his accustomed place, which for an instant gave him a queer feeling. In a few moments, however, it was all made clear to him when Professor Main, now President of the college, arose and said that, as all formal Faculty meetings were over, the body felt they would like to gather once again with their departing leader. A beautiful silver and gold loving cup was then brought in, filled with wine. Professor Main took it in his hands and addressed Dr. Gates with words most beautiful and touching. He referred to the occasion as "a sacrament of love, friendship and fellowship that time could not destroy," and said: "The cup has three handles: one was for the Faculty, one for our President, and one for Mrs. Gates." Some eight or ten others followed him in speeches fresh from their hearts, "tender and sweet," and then the cup was passed from one to the other, each drinking in silence. By the time it had reached Dr. Gates it was almost impossible for him to speak words which could convey what he felt. One of the Faculty who had been a life-long member of the Church said a year later, that for the first time he *knew* what the sacrament of the Lord's Supper meant. You may be sure that loving cup is a precious legacy to his wife and sons.

## CHAPTER III

### A YEAR IN THE PASTORATE

IN order to give Mrs. Gates the fullest opportunity to regain complete health, and to allow himself time to be adjusted to a new situation, he accepted, within a month (in December, 1901), an invitation to the First Congregational Church of Cheyenne, Wyoming. Here he spent about one year. Nowhere did his somewhat rare originality of mind show more conspicuously. Sermons preached then are still living in the hearts of many people as a unique and impressive revelation of some new and wonderful aspect of the mind and heart of the Father in His relation to His children. Thirteen years of contact with impressionable youth made him less patient with the slowness of heart and indifference of men to the Spirit of God as found in organized church life. He longed to lay his hand on clay that could be moulded while yet plastic rather than to melt or break the hardened material. To be without social vision was to him to be almost blind. So he looked forward to a return to college work somewhere in the West.

In connection with his short stay in Cheyenne one event ought to be related, as it has

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to do with state and national political history. The record is largely taken from Dr. Gates' printed story of it. In 1900 Wyoming was the one state of the Union that formally licensed gambling and actually issued gamblers' licenses. These were held, practically without exception, by saloon-keepers. At an informal meeting of four of the pastors of the city this fact came out in the conversation and it was proposed that as the Legislature was then in session it would be just the right time to abolish that dishonor. At first the suggestion was received with smiles but gradually the seriousness of the proposed question dominated the meeting. Of course the proposer was George A. Gates. It was decided to invite the coöperation of the other ministers, but all declined. That convinced the original four, Baptist, Congregational, Presbyterian and Methodist, that they must do it and "do it now." A young lawyer drew the bill and a sturdy Scotch senator presented it. Not desiring to be too bold a local-option bill was drawn up. A vote was taken in the Senate and the bill was turned down with scorn and laughter. In the Senate chamber only the four ministers from outside were present at the voting. But that Senate, as have some other Senates, met its Waterloo.

The Methodist pastor had Irish blood in his veins, the Baptist inherited a square jaw, the Presbyterian was a Scotch man, and the Congregationalist had Vermont granite in his



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makeup. Result—the local-option bill was changed into a state prohibition gambling law—and the war was on. One city paper stood for reform; the other, controlled by a United States senator, at first strongly opposed it but later, when it became popular, nearly ruined the cause by its approval. Mass meetings were held in the churches, the voting women gave their united help, but no prominent citizen would speak or preside save one,—a fine old ex-Senator. All honor to him. When the women swung solidly into the cause with their power, plus personal influence, the gamblers recognized the danger and rallied their friends fiercely to their standard. Their cohorts, from hundreds of miles, gathered at the Capitol and delays, amendments and tricky devices were used openly and shamelessly.

At last came the day for the Senate's vote. The women were there—fine strong women who as lovers of Home and Right were ready to fight if need be for their children's right to a fair chance. The saloon-keepers' "constituents" were also there and needed no label to tell whence they came, or why they were there. It took courage, great courage, to stand for that bill, for every man knew that it meant his political doom if he voted for it, for his "constituency" was threateningly watching. The plan was to kill the bill in the House and here dilatory tactics almost won, for the House vote was forced only on the last morning of

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the day on which the session expired by limitation. The ministers realized the danger and met for last desperate action. From that meeting they went out to interview the Governor, the Attorney-General, the Secretary of State and several other leading politicians. From them came the weak promise, "We will *try* to pass the bill but may fail." This was not enough and the four ministers thus declared themselves:

"There are sixty members of this Legislature, fifty-seven of whom are Republicans. Now the party thus in power either can and will not, or wills to and cannot carry a desired measure. Accept either horn of that dilemma you choose. We four men are also Republicans. But we promise you that if our party in this State is so allied with a vice like gambling, and is so weak, that with fifty-seven out of sixty votes it cannot pass this bill, then we four men will take care of our pastorates as we may or surrender them if need be, and will travel over this State and organize the moral forces therein to sweep you men out of power and even out of the Republican party." (There were not more than 40,000 voters in the State.) "You have already seen what we can do in the way of arraying voters, especially the women, on this clear moral issue; you have means, therefore, of judging the value of what we say." Those men took a little time to consider, and then they reported that in all prob-

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ability the bill would pass the next morning. It did, though many telegrams were exchanged that night with home voters and local politicians explaining the "necessity" that had arisen. It is reported that the most important of these exchanges was the obtaining of the final consent of a national Senator—one knows not if that report be true. But the battle was not yet won. For four years, by technicalities of various degrees of infamy and by the fact that the four ministers had gone from Cheyenne, the ultimate carrying out of the victory was delayed. But finally a new young city attorney came, and he saw the situation. He had the temerity to ask why that law had never been enforced and went forth and had it enforced. The chief gambler of the city moved out of town. This man was one of the "leading citizens" to receive a President of the United States when on a tour, and had dictated the politics of that great state for a dozen years.

Meantime in 1902 there came to Dr. Gates an urgent appeal to go to Talladega, one of our largest American Missionary Association schools, but the age of his two boys made it unwise to take them South into an entirely colored school. Fisk University, at Nashville, also made its plea at this time. He and his wife visited Washburn College at Topeka, Kansas, at the invitation of the Trustees, but the climate proved, even in the few days of this visit, to be similar in its effect to that at Grin-

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nell, so that it was not possible to undertake the work there.

Then followed the call to Pomona College, Claremont, California — a young Congregational college which was just coming into existence when Dr. Gates first took up the Presidency of Iowa College in 1887. The college was heavily burdened with debt and in great need of an inspiring strong leadership. Difficulties were never obstacles to George A. Gates, only an added spur. The climate promised to be an ideal one for Mrs. Gates, so that he felt it best to accept this call, and on December 4, 1901, the family arrived in Claremont.

## CHAPTER IV

### THE YEARS AT POMONA COLLEGE

AT Pomona, as at Grinnell fourteen years before, Mr. Gates at once started a campaign for the removal of the college debt. The salaries paid were probably all that seemed possible under the existing conditions but were wholly inadequate and their payment intermittent. He made a change in this latter respect at once, stipulating that on the first day of each month salaries were to be paid first, as no man could be respected or could respect himself if constantly unable to meet his living expenses. As rapidly as possible the salaries of the teaching force were increased by his special labor, although his own never changed—his attitude was never one of self-seeking but always thoughtful for others. At Pomona, his relation to the college, church and town was most intimate. All projects for civic betterment or material growth met not only his helpful word but, as far as possible, his cordial financial support. A bank, an improved cemetery, water-works and an Inn for college and town, still bear witness to his interest. Not only local affairs but all vital questions concerning Southern California were within his

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range of interest. The good roads movement, the struggle for freedom from the domination of the Southern Pacific Railroad, and all large educational questions found in him an earnest advocate and leader.

The college, including the preparatory school, grew from 245 students to 500, the college department alone from 100 to 345, and the graduating classes from 11 to 48. The building of the Carnegie library, the big dormitory for men, the observatory, together with the purchase through the generosity of one of the trustees of sixty acres of wonderful wooded land for a park, this called after the giver "Blanchard Park"—all these, with the drawing up and acceptance of a new plan for buildings of "the greater Pomona" that is to be, are no mean showing of the kind of work he was busy about. The enrollment had been doubled as had the endowment, and the assets had increased from \$238,000 to \$750,000. Figures tell somewhat and they are stated here, but the best successes are not in the outward, but in that inward spirit which triumphs over disaster and difficulties. Better yet, high scholarship, finer ideals of athletics, conduct and relations, a social vision and service in emulation of the best in character and a "Pomona Spirit," intangible but real, and like that of Grinnell, made for the unity and strength of Pomona. Best of all, a strong virile personality had given the student body some-

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thing of itself which time has no power to efface.

It was while at Pomona, in October, 1906, that Dr. Gates was invited to give the annual sermon at the Centennial Anniversary of the Haystack meeting of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions. It was a great honor, for the distinction is considered "the highest the Congregationalists of the country have in their power to bestow," or, as someone has said, the "blue ribbon of Congregationalism." That he was worthy to be so chosen an abundance of letters prove, as well as touching personal words spoken to him after the sermon. On a card sent up to him at this time a leading and brilliant preacher of this country wrote these words in pencil, "Praise God. You did honor to His name." In a letter I find written by him soon after this occasion, and referring to it, he reverently and humbly concludes, "So let it rest. The Lord can use it and will."

In the midst of all these activities—"labors of joy" as well as "works of commission and omission"—the time drew near for his departure from Pomona College. Dr. Gates was pre-eminently a teacher and an inspirational force—a Mark Hopkins type of man. In this giving of himself—this power of personality which he had to so unusual a degree—he found his greatest reward. He felt that in the modern demand made upon a college President there was too

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much of the executive, the business manager, as over against the leadership of scholarship and personality. To be responsible for internal conditions, student relations, discipline, harmony of students and Faculty, cordial and live relations with church constituency, high schools, preparatory schools, and the public in general; the maintenance of growth and high standards of scholarship and athletics, plus this constant raising of money, he thought to be a wearing and wearying combination, and almost a "President killing" combination. After twenty-one years, without a single sabbatical year, he began to find his spirits flagging and an inability to sleep nights and to grip affairs as he had always done. Although he had never failed in raising college debts and fresh endowment he often declared that he "couldn't raise money." Nevertheless he had all these years accumulated funds and added building upon building. But his heart was not in these things, and now that once again he found himself deeply involved in a money campaign, which was not only for a few months but for an indeterminate time to come, he was compelled to ask for release at once while self-recovery was possible. This decision came suddenly in December, 1908, but the conviction of its need had been growing for months.

The Board of Trustees adopted the following resolutions setting forth their sentiments concerning their retiring president: "The



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seven years of Dr. Gates' relation with the Board, through all the perplexing problems that have arisen, have been years of unbroken harmony and of mutual respect and regard and have continued without flaw until today. We desire not only to put this on record, but also to express our appreciation of the high sense of honor and fidelity that he has brought to all his work, of his broad sympathies with men and of the simplicity and winsomeness of his Christian character.

“We recognize also that under his leadership the college has made remarkable growth, more than doubling its membership and material equipment. But most of all would we give grateful expression to our sense of the service that he has rendered to the college and to the broader interests of Christian education, and of his personal influence upon the young men and women of the institution. The moral earnestness and high idealism of the student body at Pomona is so marked as to impress the most casual observer. The atmosphere is not only unmistakably Christian, but charged with the spirit of social service and unselfish living. Many influences have contributed to maintain and strengthen this condition through the years but chief among these we gratefully recognize the personal character of the retiring president.

“This inspiration of many student lives, even more than added buildings and campus,

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will remain as his enduring contribution to the life of Pomona College."

The press of Southern California regretted his departure and recognized that his going was "of great significance in educational circles." Writing of this later to a college president, Dr. Gates says:

"I can see perfectly plainly that as matters were a year and a half ago, it was a virtual impossibility for me to do this thing, that is, continue the work. There was a whole range of conditions, not any one but a considerable number, which constituted this impossibility. And when I found it absolutely killing me physically there was but one thing to do. Of course one cannot help feeling always that there are two regrets: the first, that one was not able to finish up a piece of work fairly begun; the second, a regret that in his and all human work one must find contentment in the effort to do a piece of good work and in the memory of some fair beginnings and some not insignificant successes, rather than look for very much recognition, as the years go on, of that work or success. It is just as well that our work shall so be buried—provided only it be under some foundations that can rise thereon. I shall never fail to take satisfaction in remembering that those plans for the permanent campaign, the two buildings, the library and the dormitory, as well as pledges already made for more than half of this \$250,000

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campaign, came into the college, I will not say because I was there but while I was there."

And again, "Most of us college folks, particularly the Presidents, who are, by the very nature of their office, in a position where a strong impress of one sort or another must, forsooth, be made upon successive generations of students, find this anyhow for high reward—the most holy and tender testimonies, whose genuineness cannot be doubted, from scores and hundreds of students to that which we have given them in the years when we were face to face. High wages that for any man. No true man lacks an oppressive consciousness of having failed to do in this respect what, with profounder consecration, he might have done. Nevertheless, there is enough of this sort of compensation to thrust into adequate shadow any other elements. So that down in a quiet place in the bottom of my heart I have tucked away the comfortable consciousness that underneath the glory of the permanent success lies hidden a little piece of myself, a modest piece indeed, but all I had to give."

That his students felt his decision most keenly there is abundance of evidence. The Senior class sent him the following tribute, signed by their entire number: "It is with a sense of deepest sorrow, which we cannot appreciate nor understand now, that we, the Class of 1909, receive the news of the resignation of

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our beloved College President, George Augustus Gates. We are brought face to face with a situation we can not analyze. We have only begun to realize what our President's honest service, devoted example and matchless sincerity have meant to us. We have only begun to feel the beauty of his message and the strength of his personality. He has been our inspirer, our leader, our true friend. But words are inadequate. Our whole feeling is one of love, —deep and fervent, our one hope that we may show forth in our own lives something of the sweetness and light and breadth of his to whom we must bid farewell."

In speaking before the college for the last time of these attested words of high regard and even of affection and of the students' constant loyalty to him and his to them and the institution, I find these words of his:

"Our fellowship has been good with our colleagues in student body and faculty on this campus, in these buildings, in this chapel. It has been rich and mutually enriching.

"In relations of humans with each other, there is no other higher factor than loyalty. Loyalty, if it have worthful content, includes truthfulness, frankness, faithfulness — with sharp contention of opinion oftentimes and rebuke and indignation if need arise — always frank kindness, sympathy each with the other's point of view, fair tolerance, helpfulness, love — all these are in loyalty. Loyalty is not one-

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sided; it is each to the other, and each to all—all to each.

“Of this matter of loyalty, of my part, my loyalty to the students of this college in these seven years, my single-eyed desire that the college shall do them good and only good, my effort to help create an atmosphere and spirit here best adapted to American young men and women, in this age of American and the world’s life, it is not fitting that I should speak many words, for if words are necessary then words would be in vain.

“But of the loyalty of you students to me,—I cannot trust myself to speak of it. It is an abiding and holy memory. Your ways of expressing it have been most ingenious and generous; your abundant presence in parting and greeting; your countless personal words of generous appreciation; your gifts so rich in their words and the added touch of personal signatures. I wish you could know how much I value all these. Your loyalty is a great gift. All one can do is to say ‘thank you’ and that seems inadequate.

“So we go out hence, into an even larger life, but always and everywhere at home in our Father’s house.”

He left soon after (January, 1909) for a six months’ trip to Australia and New Zealand, a trip he had been dreaming about for years. As a land of social and economic promise it had stood before him as a fascinating and educative

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study. The thirty days of wonderful calm sea-journey greatly restored his tired nerves and gave him hours of profound sleep; the blessed sleep so long delayed. By the time the ship touched land he was as eager as a boy "for to see and to hear." He had many letters of introduction to Government officials and men prominent in education and religious life. He made most delightful friendships as well as acquired large and valuable stores of information which he anticipated using in the latter days to come. Before leaving Pomona he had promised, if all went well, to return in time to graduate his Senior class, to whom he was especially attached. This he was able to do about the first of June. His last Commencement at Pomona in June, 1909, was one of peculiar joy, tinged with sadness (which is a part of all real joy) as well as peculiar freedom from responsibility. It was a fitting close to eight happy years of fruitful service. "So we go hence into an even larger life." These words uttered at the close of his Pomona address seem somewhat prophetic of what was to come. The summer he passed quickly and delightfully among his old friends in the East, feeling wonderfully free of all responsibility, and yet a bit uneasy at such unaccustomed freedom. He thought of writing a book on Australia and New Zealand, a study of their social and economic history, as a result of his six months' travel and investigation, and all

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sorts of delightful prospects sprung up in his mind's eye. God had for him, however, yet another piece of constructive work to do, before he could be released from active productive work. When the men of our American Missionary Association found him free, the old urgency, which had followed him all the years, began to make itself felt. The ever increasing difficulty of finding a leader, ripe, scholarly, cultured, to man a Southern school for the colored race made them realize their opportunity. So Dr. Ward of "The Independent" and others began their persuasions. In this case the wall of defense was weak, for down in the depths of George A. Gates' heart there was, and had always been, all the latent fire of the missionary. He had offered himself to the Foreign Board in his first ministry, but Dr. Alden had feared "his gospel might lack in theological soundness," and again, later, he was almost persuaded to join Joseph Neesima when he returned to Japan; only family ties at that time prevented. Now, his heart yearned to respond to the tremendous need set before him by the death at Fisk University of President Cravath, that noble heroic soul, who spent himself for the onward and upward journey of the colored race. No one can measure what President Cravath wrought out in those early years of the poverty, tremendous prejudice and the inertia of a race "despised and rejected of men" struggling blindly toward the light.

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Dr. Gates studied the situation carefully, prayerfully, and talked long with the Trustees of the institution. He made it clear to them, that if he accepted, he was to carry no financial burden. Of course he would give his whole soul to the work, especially along constructive lines, for Fisk had been without a head for two years, and was losing faith in herself. She needed complete rejuvenation in class-room and in fact everywhere. Dr. Gates knew himself well enough to have no fear as to ultimate success here. He had laid too many foundations and raised too many solid walls thereon to fear any failure at this point. So the Trustees pledged their coöperation and their willingness to assume entire responsibility for the financial side. Most splendidly did they keep their promise to the end. So to Fisk University at Nashville, Tennessee, early in September, 1909, Dr. Gates was minded to go.



## CHAPTER V

### PRESIDENT OF FISK UNIVERSITY

DR. GATES condenses the story of his going to Fisk University in a few words written at the time to a friend:

“It was a very great pleasure to me indeed to receive your letter. It heartened me very much to read the expressions of your judgment and feeling concerning this work. Beyond any doubt, to many it seems like stepping down into more modest work than I have done, and from some points of view that is doubtless true. As a matter of fact, when I left Grinnell ten years ago the A. M. A. wanted me to come to Fisk, whose President, Dr. Cravath (uncle, I think, of our Mr. Cravath of Grinnell), had just died. I would not even look at it, so sure did I feel that Mrs. Gates would be no more able to live in Nashville than Grinnell. I did look at Talladega, which was also vacant at that time, but I feared that.

“It seems to me quite strange and romantic that after all we should have come here. When I came East with my mother, bringing her back to her Vermont home after nearly two years with us in California, I expected to return to California within a few weeks, but the Trustees

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of Fisk and the A. M. A. people hit my trail *ventre à la terre*, and after long discussions and a visit to Nashville, it did seem possible to try it. The financial matters were put in such a way that, while of course they are ever to the front in this sort of work, nevertheless they were not pressing in the sort of way which was killing me at Pomona, and all weight of responsibility was to be carried by the Trustees. I should like to write you much of this work. I confess that it is most fascinatingly interesting to find one's self really working away next to the heart of this mighty problem. Every added item in knowledge of it adds to the appreciation of its size."

You will note here this sentence: "Beyond any doubt to many it seems like stepping into more modest work than I have ever done. . . ." This view was shared by some of his friends, one minister writing "There may be in it an element of 'humbling himself,' " while yet the writer had to acknowledge that it was singularly fit that it should be the crowning work of his long day of educational service. It was in his mind the mingling of the Cross and the Crown which after all has never gone out of fashion since the Great Coronation. This same friend continues: "All his life Dr. Gates has been the champion of those 'spoken against and without a helper.' And now again he associates himself with a cause that, while dignified and worthy, still calls for the offering in its

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behalf of some of the noblest names of the North. It is a great field and will call out all that is best in him. It is not often that a man in mature life has a chance again to hear the missionary call and to take up the missionary's life, but it seems to be his honorable privilege."

Another friend, a lawyer, wrote: "I congratulate you upon your high calling though it may be a martyrdom! It will certainly make for the welfare of humanity and the best interests of our common country."

To all these friends his replies were practically like this one: "You speak of my present work as a possible 'martyrdom.' Oh, no! I have always wanted to get into some such work as this. I feel that the Lord is very good to me to give me such an opportunity and to put such a crown upon my last years of work. In many respects it is the most inspiring work to which I have ever set my hand. If I can only keep 'humble' enough to do it well and strong enough to carry the load, this reward is enough."

And yet again, to others, Dr. Gates said: "I thank God daily for giving me this great opportunity. One certainly can feel that every ounce of lift he can pull out of himself tells at its full weight. I never was in a place where that factor stood out so prominently. And is there any joy like that one can have in connection with this work? Many a serious word has come to me from men who stand high in

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the councils of our people, when they have learned of my purpose to come here; their faces would grow sober, and a look of great seriousness would be in their eyes and tones of seriousness in their voices as they have spoken with me of this work. One of the leading men of the nation, a preacher, said to me earnestly: 'That place down there—Fisk University—is on the firing line, if there is one on this planet.' It must be a weak and cheap man that can take however modest a position 'on the firing line' in an irreverent spirit."

To Dr. Gates Fisk University represented the greatest problem ever any nation had to attack or would have dared even if it had the chance. He found there, too, "a great foundation, materially and spiritually, and a mighty work to be done." In the doing of it he found "the most rewarding work" to which he had ever set his hand.

It may seem easy from long range to try to aid in the solving of the "Negro Problem." Dr. Gates found that the longer he considered it, the more he knew of it by living with it, the more difficult and herculean became the task. It was like the Golden Rule, easy to talk about and easy to repeat, but it was as profound as is that and closely akin to it. The Spirit of Christ, merciful, patient, all-loving, the righteousness of God and His justice, and the grace of God are wrapt up in it, and these

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forces alone can solve the problem aright. The higher education of the Negro has not met with that cordial and instant response which comes to the industrial demands. Most of us believe in the Negro learning to work with his hands, but to believe him equal to thinking rightly and able to build into himself a character seems extreme and dangerous. A dozen books from this year's press which take up the Negro life and character testify to a great and vital ignorance of his real mental progress and ability. Industrial education there must be, but also an educated teaching force. If there must be, according to law, separate schools for Negroes, wherein the supply of white teachers is necessarily inadequate and in some states prohibited, then there must also be men and women not only of good education, but of equally good character to lead and teach their own people. Where are they to come from if it is not from the few strong Christian colleges for colored people?

That the greatness of the work to the individual, to the race and to the white man and this nation is recognized, the following excerpts from letters may help to show. The first is from Theodore Roosevelt:

“I cordially agree with Booker Washington in his support of Fisk because it is eminently undesirable that the Negro should have only a chance to get the technical education in industry and agriculture. With the Negro as with

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the white while such training is that of which there is fundamentally the greatest need for the greatest number, it is yet imperative for the sake of the race that there shall be opportunity of furnishing a different type of training for a certain proportion of the race. Fisk has behind it a long record of proved efficiency, and its present work is of high merit, not only from the standpoint of the colored man, but from the standpoint of the good citizen generally. I very earnestly hope that the burden resting upon Fisk may be quickly lifted. It would be a calamity not only to the cause of education but to the cause of good citizenship, to have Fisk crippled in its work."

The second is quoted in a letter from Sidney Lanier, Jr., and is taken from his father's book "The Balm of the West." The son of this Southern white poet was in fine sympathy with the work of Fisk:

"Our hardest oppositions, our greatest trials, our very evils become—what they always essentially are—our greatest blessings the moment we allow them true and free action in us. So with this darkest of our nation's questions today, this seeming shadow upon the face of the earth, the Negro question. Not only his childlike simplicity, his free and joyous nature acting as a balance of spontaneity to our over-rationalized minds, but his wealth of emotion, will change the waters of Marah into the wells of Elim. In reality the Negro is the Servant

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in the House, the Servant in the House of our America.”

Governor Hooper of Tennessee, a Trustee, writes: “I have had an opportunity to observe the work of Fisk University at close range. There can be no question but that this school is doing a great and permanent work for the colored race of the whole nation, and especially the South. It holds high rank as an educational institution, and commands the respect of both races.”

Chancellor Kirkland of Vanderbilt University, probably the largest and strongest of universities for white men in the Southland, expressed his appreciation as he did his friendship in no uncertain terms:

“I desire to express to you my appreciation of the splendid work you have undertaken in the upbuilding of Fisk University. This institution has had a long and honorable career, and has done a noble work in the higher education of Negroes in the South. The results of its labors are quite apparent to one who has lived in the South for the past twenty-five years. Leaders of the Negro race in the pulpit and in the schoolroom have been trained very largely by Fisk University. I know of no other institution of like character that has held so constantly to high standards and ideals. The work that has been accomplished gives the best claim for future enlargement. This calls for larger resources and wider support. In the great task

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you have set before yourself you should have the sympathy, the encouragement, and financial support not only of a small section, but of philanthropic friends throughout our whole nation. I trust that you may not lack for any of these things."

Dr. Gates tells the following story which proves that the Athenians were wise in their desire to see all things and to hear new and even strange doctrines: "For some time past it has been the custom of Fisk University to offer to the biennial session of the Tennessee Legislature a complimentary concert at Fisk Memorial Chapel. The legislators and their friends showed themselves appreciative of this invitation by attending very generally. Governor Hooper and Mrs. Hooper and family attended the concert last April. I could not fail to notice that both were very much interested. At the close of the concert Mrs. Hooper said to me, with a deal of impressiveness: 'I am a Southern woman, with a Southern woman's opinion and possibly prejudices about Negroes, but I want to say to you, that what I have seen and heard this evening has changed my whole attitude toward the race for all my life.' Some days later Governor Hooper was present at the graduating exercises connected with the Negro High School of Nashville. This is a popular event on the Negro calendar, and brings together some thousands of Negroes in Ryman Auditorium. Governor Hooper accepted an in-



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vation to be present and make an address. I was not there but it was reported to me that he said something like this: 'Mrs. Hooper and I attended the complimentary concert given by Fisk University students to the Legislature and State officials. We were both greatly impressed by the evidences of solid attainments in real culture and in the different departments of music study which were put before us. On the way home Mrs. Hooper said to me, "Ben, the colored people of this country have never had the chance which they deserve. I hope you, during your governorship, will do all you can for them."' It is our universal experience at Fisk University that when people from either North or South, but particularly Southern people, once see and hear and know what we are doing, their resulting opinions and sentiments are like those quoted from Governor and Mrs. Hooper."

That the colored people appreciated Dr. Gates' presence among them and work for them, let this one letter suffice:

"I am deeply indebted to you for your efforts in behalf of my people and their best educational institution; as a Fiskite, my gratitude is more heartfelt than it is utterable. Criticism, malice, bitterness and all that is unpleasant may beset your path, but you will always find that the real bulwark of Fisk—the Alumni—are with you. As one of your Faculty expressed it, 'We will all agree that President

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Gates has contributed to the glory of Fisk.' ''

Education does not always spell character among the whites and blacks, but Fisk and Talladega and other institutions of like rank *do* stand primarily for just that. In the two years which followed President Gates' inaugural, Fisk standards were raised, discipline strengthened, a *spirit* created, an enthusiasm engendered, and many young men and women went forth to preach into reality the gospel of high thinking and high living which they had so freely absorbed.

## CHAPTER VI

### THE LAST CHAPTER

It was a beautiful morning in February, 1912, when President Gates left Nashville for New York to begin there with the Trustees and their Advisory Committee and an able financial agent and treasurer the campaign for an Endowment Fund for Fisk University. The following day, near Huntingdon, Pennsylvania, on the "Limited" came the accident which ultimately closed his earthly career. Many were injured, a few killed, and others died later. Dr. Gates seemed at first to be one of the least injured and gave aid generously to others, but he was the last to leave the hospital where all were cared for so efficiently. All thought of going on with the campaign had to be given up, and he who had gone toward New York with such an undaunted morning face, returned home with energy of body and mind weakened. He tried slowly to resume his work, but the first attempt ended in complete mental and physical collapse. A leave of absence followed and all the spring in the mountains of North Carolina mental vigor and physical strength were sought for but not found. As the Commencement time drew near (which

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would be the completing of his twenty-five years of academic work) he pleaded so hard to be allowed to return to Fisk to give out the diplomas to the graduating class that it was deemed wise to yield. He was relieved of all responsibility, and every plan for his comfort was made, and three days before Commencement he arrived. It was a heartening time. The tender sympathy which had followed him all winter through letters, now flowed directly to him, and he had that rare satisfaction of receiving while yet here words of appreciation and love. The future was veiled, but unknown to all it was the emptying of the alabaster box—the anointing unto burial. At Commencement, the dignity of a great apprehension sat upon him like a crown and many felt it was the last time “our President” would be among them.

Yet the summer following, in the bracing Vermont hills of his childhood, he seemed for a time to win a certain measure of mental vigor. It was but a seeming, for suddenly came attacks of mental disturbance so serious as to necessitate his immediate resignation from Fisk, which resignation was written by his wife without his permission or knowledge. Not until the die was cast was he told, in order that the relief of it might lessen the constant pressure on the brain of his incessant thought of and for Fisk. The instant and continuing relief justified the action while it could not

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retard the results from concussion of the brain, which his physician found had unmistakably begun its deadly work. Now came another trip South, with a consultation with expert brain specialists on the way, the hopeful verdict of which cheered him greatly and gave him a month of wonderful seeming relief, so that his best friends did not and could not understand or realize how critical his real condition was. After only ten days in the far South came another brain storm with utter collapse physically, in which, after four days with but a few hours of clear mind (when there came a wondrous vision of "things unseen"), this man, so undaunted in spirit, but held in the grip of an unsound mind, departed this life. The terrible shock to those nearest and dearest was felt in some measure among all who had held him as friend, counsellor and leader. One friend wrote at this time concerning the sudden going: "He was so essentially a man of the day, a man of energy and action, that a long twilight would have seemed inappropriate. I, at least, hadn't been able to get my mind around to it; so even in this shock and distress, I dare to say that it seemed almost fitting to have him go without too long delay." Wondrous kindness at this time of great sorrow flowed like a river to that lonely wife and her aged mother so far from home and dear ones.

The body was brought to Grinnell, Iowa,

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where seventeen years before, the beloved daughter was laid to rest. It was a homecoming, for it was to his own people whom he had loved and served many a year.

Pomona College sent as its representative Dr. Gates' especially loved friend, Professor Brackett, while up from Nashville came as Fisk's representatives Mr. and Mrs. Work (Professor Work as a member of the Faculty) and with them the choicest of the Jubilee Singers, whose contribution of song was as unique as it was comforting in its tenderness and power. At the chapel of Iowa College a special memorial service was held, intimate, personal, as of one family, and later a more formal service at the Congregational Church. Something of this service Professor Brackett has told in his article printed in the "Pomona College Quarterly Magazine" for January, 1913.

"When President Gates went away from Claremont after that memorable last Baccalaureate sermon, it was difficult for us to realize that he was gone and that we should hear him no more. Indeed his words still live. Like seeds sown in many a soul, they have grown up to bear fruit in noble, courageous life. And so when word came that he was dead, it was difficult to realize that he was gone, that we should never again look into his kindly face, or feel the pressure of his hand. Yet he is not dead. His spirit in Pomona can never die. This thought, so strong in all our minds, was

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the central thought of the memorial services at Grinnell.

President Main said, "He made a priceless contribution to Grinnell. He gave it a soul like his own. It is profoundly true that he lives in this institution now, today. This college is carrying his spirit on and on to generations that know him not." Referring to a meeting of the Grinnell faculty on the last day of President Gates' official life there, President Main said: "The only action was the presentation to him of a loving cup by the members of the faculty. This gift to him was a token of love and confidence and devotion. There was some juice of the grape in the cup and we passed it around, each taking a sup as a pledge of good fellowship and good will. President Gates was entirely taken by surprise and was hardly able to respond to the sentiments expressed, but this is the word he said which I remember: 'This is not a faculty meeting. It is a sacrament.' That last meeting was one of the unforgettable things in the life of each one who was there. It could not have happened in just this way with anyone else. It could not have happened in a company that was not brought together by ties of strong good will. The spirit expressed was typical of the spirit of the man.

"It was fitting that the body of President Gates should be brought to Grinnell and laid to rest beside that of his daughter. It was right that the memorial and funeral services

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should be held there amid the scenes of his most strenuous labors and his longest service. And it was appropriate that Fisk University and Pomona College should both be represented in these services by members of their faculties. It was natural that we should all think and speak of him as our leader and captain and the verses of Whitman's poem, 'O Captain, My Captain,' were appropriately read.

"O Captain, my Captain! our fearful trip is done,  
The ship has weather'd every rack, the prize we sought is won.

The port is near, the bells I hear, the people all exulting,  
While follow eyes the steady keel, the vessel grim and daring;

But O heart! heart! heart!

O the bleeding drops of red,  
Where on the deck my Captain lies,  
Fallen cold and dead."

"Notwithstanding the profound sadness and sorrow which pervaded the college chapel and the old stone church where the services were held, the dominant note throughout was one of great achievement and triumph."

Some further sentences from the message from Pomona may be quoted:

"He came to Pomona at a time when there was need of a leader of integrity, of absolute candor and courage. In all these his greatness is well known. We can not here review the fine work of those years at Pomona, nor can we explain that rare spirit of manliness which



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emanating from him pervaded the whole student body. It was chiefly through his Friday morning chapel talks and his personal touch with the young men and women that he set his high and permanent mark upon the college. How many times, to young men groping in the dark, he has shown the truth as by a flash of pure light, revealing men to themselves and pointing the way to what he called the good success. One secret of his power was his faith in his fellows. How completely he trusted us all—students, teachers and friends—not with a simple, childlike trust, but with a great, philosophical, Christ-like confidence, which might perhaps rarely be betrayed, but that drew out a man's best by its very utterness. The leader is gone. Yet I know that we shall continue consciously and unconsciously to measure life and conduct in many respects by his standards and there are many whose lives will always be stronger, truer, because of his inspirations and the vows made before him.

“To both Grinnell and Pomona President Gates gave a national position. This Fisk already possessed. ‘In shaping so largely the character of these representative colleges and in the natural contact of his position with other institutions throughout the country his influence was nation-wide in extent. We can understand somewhat, now that we see the great work as a whole, better than we did at the time, that Providence which took him from

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Grinnell a dozen years ago and then gave him to us, and which three years ago took him from us and gave him to Fisk.

“I have been reading again in ‘The Student Life’ the words spoken in chapel on the spur of the moment out of a full heart, after President Gates had announced his resignation, when I said: ‘I am convinced that as the months and years go by we shall realize more and more that we are now losing a great educator, a man whose nobility of character and Christian leadership is not excelled in any college in the land.’ The verity of these words is clearer now than when they were spoken.

“During the seven years of President Gates’ administration at Pomona College the number of students increased from 245 to 500, the number of college students from 100 to 345, and the graduating class from 11 to 48; the library, Smiley Hall and the observatory were built and sixty acres were added to the campus, while the endowment funds were more than doubled. But this material growth, exceptional as it was, is far less important than the advance in *esprit de corps* and character. Grinnell is full of the ‘Grinnell spirit,’ and Pomona is proud of the ‘Pomona spirit,’ and in them both is the spirit of George A. Gates himself—his sincerity, his zeal for truth and hatred of sham, that spirit which was thus characterized in the ‘Appreciation’ written for ‘The Student Life’ four years ago:

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“ ‘His greatness as an educator consists in the greatness of his ideals, and these ideals, like his nobility of character and Christian leadership, are the result of one underlying, vital fact—a profound, unshaken belief in God and his fellow-man. He ever sees the best things. Like Mrs. Booth, Jane Addams, Jacob Riis and other great workers for their fellow-men, he believes in men. He inspires them to believe in themselves and to determine to make the most of themselves. His spirit is the spirit of the Master, proclaiming by teaching and example that the best life, the most successful life, is the life of largest possible service and usefulness.’ ”

“President Main interprets this spirit in almost identical words: ‘He injected the spirit of service into every brick and foundation stone on the campus. He introduced a policy of confidence, a policy of belief in men and women.’ ”

From the address of Professor John Wesley Work of Fisk at the funeral the following extracts are taken:

“When this great, big, earnest man came to Fisk University, to take up the work there, he accepted and undertook the most difficult problem that he had undertaken, but before I had known him long I found that he wanted something difficult to do. . . . He changed the whole life of that institution in the short time he was there. . . . He utterly disregarded everything

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of race and color and put everyone upon the basis of men and women. . . . There is no person who has made such a good impression upon the city of Nashville as the good man before us. . . . I stand here to offer the love of the people there who knew him and loved him, to say that we of the University and of Nashville, Tennessee, will always be better because Dr. Gates decided to cast his lot among us."

The conviction felt by President Gates that God had called him to the work at Fisk was voiced in the duet, of which he was especially fond, sung at this time by Professor and Mrs. Work, both Negroes, "I know the Lord hath laid His Hands on Me."

No one can measure the intimacy and the power of his relations with individual students and teachers; they are too sacred to be exposed. But these words from Dr. Gates' letter to the students published in "The Student Life" of Pomona College give some hint of, and reveal as well, his appreciation of these relations:

"So many expressions of high regard are reaching me from graduates and students that it was almost worth while to pay the full price—for what my resignation is costing me no one is likely to understand. There are many pleasant features connected with the work of college administration, but no one of them can be compared to the deep joy of touching intimately the lives of the men and women that

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constitute the student body. In the measure of success of our work together in and for this college, the high loyalty of the students has full share. The fine spirit of the student body is Pomona's pride."

He was an inspiring leader, filling others with his own courage and vision, open and frank in all his methods, fearless in his attack, never asking others to go where he would not lead. But the fight which he captained was not against men, it was against evil, against social wrongs, against political corruption. How he hated all these things!

Yet while he was a great, brave fighter, there was no stronger advocate of peace. He was recognized as one of the many men leading on the world movement for international peace, rejoicing in the progress of the movement at The Hague and delighted by the setting up of the cross on the Andes between Chili and Peru.

This was only a manifestation of his great love for his fellow-men. He was indeed a lover of men. Unreserved in his casual meetings with people of all sorts, he cheered many a stranger with his frank address and wholesome conversation. His acquaintances all felt the warmth of his interest and sympathy. This intense love for men was quite regardless of race or nationality or circumstances and did not stop with those who cared for him. As President Main said: "He could forgive seventy times

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seven. He simply couldn't hold a grudge. He came as near loving his enemies as any man I ever knew. He was sensitive to wrong and slight, but ready at any time to receive back with open arms anyone who wanted to come."

One of those who had opposed him in the strenuous days of the "Kingdom" movement, speaking at the funeral told this characteristic story: "I shall never forget a scene which occurred just here in the stone church. I had preached both morning and evening and President Gates had honored me with his presence. At the close of the evening service he alone came forward and said, 'You have given me a good day.' But that is not the point. Pressing my hand more cordially, with tears in his voice, a rare thing for him, he said, 'Douglass, I wish you loved me.' We were opposites in some respects, and as he was high in office and attainments, and I low in office, I did not think he cared whether I loved him or not, and as I came to know him better I found that he craved friendship and friends. . . . I learned to love him after that occasion as the years came and went. I loved him for his virtues; I loved him for those things which perchance some count his weaknesses; I loved him for his abruptness, his openness, his communicativeness. . . . I think the message which comes to us at this time from the Scriptures is, 'Be ye kind one to another, tender hearted, forgiv-

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ing one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you!' "

Personality is a very real thing and yet elusive to transmute into words. You have caught perhaps something of what this man was, but he was always greater than his deed. One of his successors in office said to him: "You have set a standard for myself and for all those who will come after you." Many, a surprising number, have written of the power and virility of some word, address, or sermon, or even of social contact with him, which has power yet to stir their mind and quicken their heart. One in hearing his sermon at the National Congregational Council at St. Louis said to him: "I will not say to you that that sermon is the best I ever heard; I do not know or care about so irrelevant a matter as that. But I could not go away without saying, that I never heard a spoken word that lifted me so far along or so high up." It was always a "piece of himself" that he gave to those who came in contact with him. Yet another spoke of meeting him and feeling as though he "had taken twenty grains of quinine." When he entered a room he brought a certain north wind with him, stimulating the mind and opening the heart to give out its best. The story is told that Washington once said to Alexander Hamilton: "You have a streak of light in you that never goes out. When I catch a spark of it I am cheered for the rest of the day. When I am close to it for

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a time, I can feel the iron lid on my spirits lifting as if it were on a bubbling pot." These words might have been spoken of George A. Gates.

He believed mightily in good women and publicly espoused their cause early in his life. He had always believed in women's suffrage, but after nine months in Colorado in 1900, when he and his wife went together to the polls, and when in Wyoming later he saw the power of woman's influence, plus the ballot, to win moral victory, his belief took on unshaken conviction. To him women turned the leaves of their heart and mind in a rare way, and he was father-confessor to many a burdened soul. Women had with him a sense of being protected, knowing that in his hands all was safe. The death of his beloved and only daughter in her blossoming time left a tender spot in his heart toward all young women. He saw them as through her eyes with exquisite appreciation and tenderness, and followed their growth as he would have done hers had God spared her to him. Note the discerning spirit of the man in his tribute to Julia Ward Howe, when he led the devotional memorial exercises in Boston in 1910 at the National Congregational Council:

"We are gathered not to praise Julia Ward Howe, but to commemorate her life and bow reverently at the hour of her funeral, as this great American passes under the majesty of



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death. To praise such a woman is impertinent. To use the occasion of this memorial service for the turning of rhetorical phrases about her would seem as much out of order as pretty compliments about one of the planets of the solar system. No small part of her greatness is her simplicity. Her sweet womanhood was ever at the service of her home, as wife and mother; when mind and heart, voice and pen, were on call there leaped into prominence a human need to be met, a wrong crying to be righted, a cause of human advancement wanting a voice. Pausing just long enough to sing the victory of achievement her eyes quickly turned toward new achievements. So she has led, and the inspiration of her memory will lead us all."

He believed mightily also in democracy, the people—all sorts and kinds. This belief sometimes led him into unusual and more direct methods of approach than many could have found or would so have chosen to use if found. He reached people's hearts and minds by short cuts, not always using the formal methods of presentation. Sometimes this brought him censure and misjudgment but more often men and women, after the first surprise, recognized the genuineness and nobility of the man and were often drawn toward him by this unique and unusual characteristic. His intense sincerity drove him imperatively from anything sinuous, roundabout or underhanded. To think

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or to hold a mean thought was a hideous sin to him. He could forgive seven times seven and only once in thirty years did I know of his finding it almost impossible to think gently and forgivingly, and then it was of one who he felt had wronged him, and through him the best interests of a cause dear to him. The very day of his death, when, in a wonderful hour of what might be called "ecstatic vision," his release from this heavy burden came, he said, "Now, I can love even ——." To a man of his strength such a victory can not be estimated in words. God knew and gave of His grace in this last moment of earthly life.

He was a ready writer, and his pen flowed unceasingly in many directions. Any really extensive creative work in book form, however, was stored in his mind for those years to come, when the toiling days would be over. But, as one said of him, "President Gates used as tablets 'hearts of flesh.' "

That the gospel which Dr. Gates lived had power to send out to the uttermost parts of the earth "living epistles" is shown by the list of some seventeen foreign missionaries, not to mention others, who went out on Christian service during his college administration. In the home field his boys and girls can be found in many places leading in social betterment and the ministry of service. He believed in his college, men and women, and cheered them in their work and sustained their faith in days

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of uncertainty. He stood to many as a strong tower for liberty in the interpretation of the Scriptures, for to him the word of the Lord was sure—Truth ultimately prevails. He taught men to know themselves “in the light of the highest sense of right that a man is capable of.” From one has come this word of personal testimony: “One sentence in your address changed my life—and by the grace of God made me of whatever use I have been. . . . I have never touched you except to receive help. Virtue has gone out of you. . . . You have helped, strengthened, encouraged and inspired me more than you dreamed.”

This tender bit was found enclosed in a letter of sympathy from one of the boys in his last graduated class at Pomona, and shows perhaps more clearly the affection with which he was held in many a student's heart:

“In Prexy's face  
Are many stories—some of them are glad,  
Told in a smile of youthful joy and mirth;  
And some of them are tender, having birth  
In tears of sympathy when hearts are sad.  
Power, strength and comfort, all are there,  
And even a dim, soft shadow, sorrow's trace—  
With these the hand of time has set love's seal  
In Prexy's face.”

A trustee wrote of him: “No other man I ever knew stood so squarely for ‘just balances, just weights, a just ephah and a just hin.’ ” A leader in social uplift speaks of him as fol-

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lows: "Strength and tenderness are a rare combination in human character, and as beautiful as rare. Such a man cost God a great deal, and such powers do not complete their service in a few earthly years. If they were not immortal and used in never-ending service their loss would be a loss to the universe and would be a waste which would be utterly inconsistent in an infinitely wise and benevolent Creator. His going was a loss to us, but not to the Kingdom of God, and least of all to him. I doubt not he is engaged in service far more worthy of his splendid powers and spirit than any he was permitted to render in the flesh—great as that was."

Only one more extract must be given, and that because of the unusual quality of testimony: "I was passing through the town a couple of months ago where Dr. George A. Gates joined the immortals—a fascinating, romantic, splendid, tragic life. This is my deliberate conviction about Gates. He came as near filling my conception of what the term Christian means as any man I have ever known. Always in the front for his ideals regardless of consequences to himself, and his battles wore him out. He has fallen outside of the breastworks. I knew the type before I ever knew him or Dartmouth. I had seen idealists like him hold desperate lines and fling themselves against entrenchments and open the way so that those in the rear might win the battle.

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And how he helped! He left his impress on thousands of men, young and old. No time-server he; and to few men of his time, more than to him, is due the fact that we have a new republic with new ideals, and it is owing to men like Gates that it is such a splendid thing to be alive today. I am not a member of any church, nor a subscriber to any of the creeds, but I do believe that we are going to put the Golden Rule and the ethics of Jesus Christ into public life. And that was the star that Gates followed, as the knights of old followed the Holy Grail, and it will lead us at last to the Ox-stall and the Manger, where, in his swaddling clothes, a new Christ lies—the Christ of human brotherhood.”

Dr. Gates could have said with Tennyson, “I should infinitely rather feel myself the most miserable wretch on the face of the earth, with a God above, than the highest type of man *standing alone*.”

To him it was

“Not in the cloister dim,  
Not along the tortuous way—  
But where men are, in the conflict grim  
Of life in the world,  
Not pausing to doubt, but resting to pray.”

He was preëminently “a friend to man and lived in a house by the side of the road.” His passionate desire was to have a clearer and fuller vision of God and “the glory of going on and still to be.” These, his last words,

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found on his desk after his death, express his trust in God, in which trust he so amply lived unto the end. They were written for the Fellowship meeting held yearly at Fisk University which brought into closer touch by written word all those who represented the Past and those who were of the Present:

“Sometimes when listening or speaking at the telephone there is a click; then silence; you are ‘cut off.’ Well, that is what happened to me. It is very disconcerting, i. e., it snaps one out of concert or harmony, in which one has been for some forty years taking one’s place in the work of the world alongside his fellow-men.

“That experience is text for my little contribution to our reunion meeting: viz., When we have a chance, take it and use it. We may not get another. There is in my office desk a whole drawerful of memoranda of high and fine words which I have been saving up for use in chapel and elsewhere—and now it is too late.

“I am profoundly grateful for the chance I have had in this great school; grateful specifically for the many kind words that have come to me latterly, expressions of appreciation of what I have tried to do in the brief time I was permitted to be one of you in presence and work.

“So, if anyone here now has a helpful word to speak, any service to contribute to the structure of institution or spirit going up here on

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this hill, let it not be withheld or postponed: 'Do it now.'

"Anyhow we are all in God's love and care, and are at home with Him in Christ. Whatever our experience, no fatal harm can befall us who put our trust in God."

The Trustees of Grinnell College expressed themselves in the following resolution:

"We the Trustees of Grinnell College desire to place upon record our sense of loss in the death of a former Chairman of this Board for many years, Dr. George A. Gates, President of Iowa College from 1887 to 1901, who gave to this college the best years of his life, serving it with ability and fidelity and distinction, with steadfast enthusiasm and splendid devotion and loyalty unbounded. With a bracing and chivalrous and inspiring personality President Gates was indeed a courageous and heroic spirit, whose life was a challenge to service; who gave to thousands of young men and young women their best ideals and profoundest convictions—to the permanent enrichment of their lives; who gave to all with whom he came into contact an inspiring example of a brave, loyal, truth-loving soldier of the common good. 'Man's unhappiness,' said Thomas Carlyle, 'arises from his greatness,' and so President Gates was one who could not sit at ease within Zion, but who yearned to realize the Kingdom of God upon earth, here and now. We rejoice that his successor could say over his grave that

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President Gates brought a new vision to the College, and that he had inscribed the word Service upon every brick on the campus. We rejoice that his work and his memory, here and elsewhere, abide, and that we his long-time friends and comrades dare to apply to him, as most fitting, these lines characterizing an undaunted soul:

‘One who never turned his back but marched breast  
forward,  
Never doubted clouds would break,  
Never dreamed, though right were worsted, wrong would  
triumph,  
Held we fall to rise, are baffled to fight better,  
Sleep to wake.’”

Mazzini describes a great man as one who is “endowed by God with a faculty of feeling more largely and intensely, and, as it were, of absorbing more than his fellows of that universal life which pervades and inter-penetrates all things, and who breathes it out again at every pore.” In this sense George A. Gates was a great man—“He was not faultless, but in all things essential he was great.”

An endowed President’s chair is his monument at Fisk University. At Grinnell College “The George A. Gates Memorial Lectureship” is established and is bringing its yearly enrichment to college and town. Pomona College speaks of the eminent fitness of such a monument to his memory by quoting “The Grinnell



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Review": "Dr. Gates believed thoroughly that the college student should have the privilege of hearing the men and women who are doing the world's work. Through his wide acquaintance he was able to attract to Grinnell, as afterwards to Pomona, many of those most distinguished and most inspiring to young people. In no more appropriate way could Dr. Gates' memory be honored than in the perpetuation of this peculiarly fine service of his. President Gates gave the best years of his life to Grinnell. He gave the College a new impetus and put it into vital and harmonious relation with the new movement of society, education, and college administration. He greatly endeared himself to a multitude of young people. They look back to him as a creative influence in their lives. His name should be perpetually associated with Grinnell College. The fund raised, twenty thousand dollars, will enable the College to emphasize in his name the principles of social democracy and righteousness which were so dear to him and which are so vital in the development of the race."

One of Grinnell's eminent professors adds his unique word, "Living endowment is the thing for our Gates. You cannot express such a man in marble or brass."

At Pomona College, California, a memorial set of chimes will ring out, temporarily from the College church tower, but later from the new chapel that is to be, somewhat of that

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triumphant faith and joy which made Dr. Gates a living spirit.

These memorials characterize the man. So though his body has gone back to earth, his soul is ever marching on. Death can not dim his memory nor will the influence of his noble life be abated. To him Death must have been but a "change of key in Life—the Golden Melody."





